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featuring UD

Story ideas for print and broadcast media

UD PROFESSOR RETURNS FROM CHINA FILLED WITH OUTRAGE AND SHOCK OVER VIOLENCE

When Sister Judith Martin arrived at Dayton's airport Sunday night and saw the headlines about the massacre of Chinese students in Beijing, she began crying.

"It was a shock. I just couldn't help crying. It was like those were my students," said Martin, an assistant professor of religious studies at the University of Dayton who spent May 9-June 1 in Beijing and other parts of China as part of a sabbatical to learn how religion has affected the lives of women around the world.

"The government can never regain any kind of respectability," said Martin, who teaches classes on world religions at UD. "There was absolutely no reason for this kind of massive attack against unarmed, organized, peaceful students."

One UD group is still in China. Michael Yin, a Chinese language professor, and 10 American students are spending six weeks at Fu Dan University in Shanghai and two weeks in Hong Kong. They are due to return June 30.

For media interviews, call Sister Judith Martin at 258-2469 or 229-4438.

MILITARY COUP, CIVIL WAR OR GOVERNMENT COLLAPSE COULD BE NEXT IN CHINA

Following a weekend of government violence against protesting students in China, a UD professor says almost anything is possible in that country. "The China situation could become so chaotic that nobody will be able to predict what will happen," says T.C. Rhee, a professor of history and native of Korea who travels to Asia each year.

"A military coup is a possibility in China. Or a massive nationwide strike could lead to civil war," Rhee said. "The situation could develop into a bloody repression or it could lead to the collapse of the Communist government in China." His personal view is that the government will suppress the students' demand for democracy "no matter what it takes."

For media interviews, contact T.C. Rhee at (513) 229-3046.

EXCESSIVE VIOLENCE NOT IN KEEPING WITH HISTORY OF CHINESE GOVERNMENT

Antonio Lapitan, a UD political science professor who has studied Chinese politics for 30 years, expected the Chinese government to react to student demonstrations in support of democracy. "But I didn't expect this violence," he said of repeated military attacks against the students. "It's been frightening. This is not in keeping with the past record of the government. They have always been able to use force within reason."

"We're still trying to determine the explanation behind the government behavior," he said. "If the violence was willed at the top, once the military was unleashed they may not have been able to control it. That happened before, during the Cultural Revolution. If that is the case, it will be difficult for even the government in China to control the direction of the Chinese political system."

For media interviews, contact Antonio Lapitan, call (513) 229-4326.



The University of Dayton

For further information or assistance in scheduling interviews, contact Public Relations and University Communications, 229-3241.